



Leading Quality Addiction Treatment in the Northern Rockies

EXHIBIT - 3
DATE 1/21/2011
HB

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF
THE BUDGET OF THE ADDICTIVE AND MENTAL DISORDERS DIVISION

Mona L. Sumner, MHA ACATA
Chief Operations Officer

It is easy to reduce expenses if we simply take the broad brush approach and eliminate a % of every governmental unit's expenses. Is it the smart way? Is it really in the best interests of tax payers to do it this way? We think not. Rimrock Foundation is Montana's oldest and largest addiction treatment center. Three years ago, the legislature made an historical decision to spend some general fund dollars for the purpose of expanding access to residential treatment for Montana's most under-served population, the indigent. Until that time, the only dollars used for treatment in Montana were federal dollars.

As a result of this historical decision, the Residential Treatment Expansion Consortium was developed and today, we have scientific data that demonstrates the cost-benefit of one important component of this consortium, the White Birch Center in Billings that we operate. In just this program alone, here is data that illustrates why you don't want to do the across the board reductions:

The cost-benefit analysis of this program which includes of our citizens is 3 to 1. That is, for every one dollar you have invested in this Program, three dollars has been saved in the criminal justice system and the Healthcare system in our state.

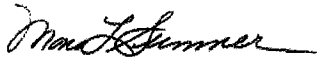
Paul Polzin, PhD. Of the Economic Bureau of the University of Montana has provided information regarding the impact of helping these folks into the employment. On admission, only 19.7% were employed. At twelve months, 87.6% were employed—a 67.9% increase. This impact on our economy of this increase means, according to Dr. Polzin, that \$3, 663,000 is circulating in our economy that otherwise would not be.

You can read more about the outcome and effect of this program in the report we have provided. What this report does not tell you, is about the difference treatment has made in the lives of these patients.

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Imagine a 47 year old man who has lost everything due to his addiction: his long-term business, his wife, his only child and all of his self-respect. He has had multiple treatment attempts and failures and is facing serious health problems if he cannot get his addiction under control. This was how he presented to White Birch Center eight months ago.

He accepted a referral to Sober Housing where he has lived for seven months. He is enrolled in a radiology technician program and last weekend, we gave him a pass to take his daughter skiing at Red Lodge. He does not look anything like the man we saw eight months ago. Thanks to you and your colleagues who funded this system of care we are returning people to real productivity and we are saving our state money! Please remember this as you review the budget of the Chemical Dependency Bureau. Don't be mislead into thinking by cutting some dollars out of their budget, you are saving anything. such an action can't begin to save what this one program is already saving this state.



Chief Operations Officer

November 24, 2010

Dear Friend and Colleague,

Yesterday, I was reminded of how really fortunate I am to work at Rimrock Foundation and be part of this special process of healing. At this time of Thanksgiving, I thought I would share this little story and my own gratitude.

Recently, we accepted a patient into Michel's House. This young woman has spent most of her life abandoned and imprisoned—both parents were severe addicts and she has learned to get by anyway she could. She adopted a child her prison cell mate had.. a meth baby. Severely addicted herself, she nonetheless loved this child dearly although as with any addict parent, neglected him. When this child arrived at Michel's House, we noted an unusual reaction from him. He dragged his suitcase into the house, asked "where is our room?" and when told, promptly moved in. He had all of his clothes unpacked, in the dresser, and his stuffed animals on the bed with unbelievable speed. At that point, he did not want to come out of the room but he wanted all to see "his" room. This behavior of course, was the first clue that this child desperately needed to feel safe, from what we could not know at that time. His speech was very delayed and he appeared hyperactive. Having, however, the blessing of experience, I knew that it was more likely he had suffered some trauma and anxiety was driving the behavior. He is a very loving child and everyone at the house loved him instantly. He had been grossly over medicated prior to admission, was under weight and slept poorly. Once off all medications, he gained 8 pounds in the few short weeks he has been with us and amazingly, his speech is very much more understandable. His mother is taking all suggestions and working hard with him on his speech and of course it is paying off! Our psychiatrist made a visit to his kindergarten, yes, he sat in little people chairs and observed this child because we knew we needed to have an accurate diagnosis. Imagine the surprise the teaching staff experienced when our psychiatrist came unannounced to school! But that is what we do here, leaving no stone unturned to get to the core issues of each patient and the Michel House children are our patients as well as their moms.

Mom reported to me last week in parenting how thrilled she is because her son is actually taking naps—a behavior she has not witnessed since he was an infant. Again, that nagging little voice inside me said, "he's finally feeling safe"... wondering what in the world this child has seen and been through. Well, now we know. When mom was last in jail, this child was placed in the home of an "uncle". The uncle molested this child in ways to awful to commit to paper. We only learned of this three days ago when he explained his "owies" to his mother. Our little boy spent last night in the hospital undergoing tests due to this abuse. However, mom was with him, another Michel House mom stayed with his mom and we all took turns calling throughout the evening to offer

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reassurance. I have him seeing a clinical psychologist and friend who will be able to help him and through play therapy, his life will continue to normalize. We are still not over the shock of the horrifying abuse of this child and you can well imagine the therapy mom now needs to be able to forgive herself for not being there for her son.

Thank God we have a program and one that allows these families to stay for as long as they need the treatment...no artificial deadlines, just good care delivered in the right dose.

Thankyou Joan Cassidy and the Chemical Dependency Bureau because without your commitment, we could not do this work. And we are privileged to do this work because we see the daily miracles of lives transformed. And this little life will be healed however long it takes and no matter what resources are needed. In addition to the clinical psychologist who specializes in children, a child psychiatrist is also on the team as of today to work with this child and his mother. I of course, remain, the parenting coach who over the months, will offer mother new insights and support together with our fine team of case managers and therapists. It just doesn't get better than this and that is what I am grateful for this Thanksgiving.